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4. — *The Most Important Parts of Blackstone's Commentaries reduced to Questions and Answers.* By ASA KINNE. New York : W. E. Deane. 1838. 8vo. pp. 190.

THE compiler of this book has transcribed, nearly or quite *verbatim*, Mr. Field's "Analysis of Blackstone's Commentaries, in a Series of Questions," published in 1811; to which he has annexed brief answers, from the text itself. The merit of Mr. Field's plan consisted in this, that, in order to answer the questions, the pupil must study, and even master, the entire Commentaries; while his attention was at the same time drawn to the principal subjects. But Mr. Kinne, having set down an answer to each question, either takes away a chief motive to study and reflection, or leads the student to a view of the subject so very rapid and superficial, as to leave but few and faint traces in the mind. The former method calls into action and improves the whole intellect; the latter exercises the memory alone. The one would qualify the student to compose a legal catechism; the other will only enable him to say he has learned one. The difference between them is like that between two students of mathematics, the one of whom has solved each problem for himself, while the other has only transcribed and committed to memory the results of his fellow. He does but wade; his fellow can swim.

Of the present compiler's honesty in offering this book to the public as his own original conception; in withholding all allusion to Mr. Field, into whose labors he has so unceremoniously entered; and in using parts of that gentleman's preface without acknowledgment, we at present say nothing. Our main purpose in noticing this production is to record our solemn and earnest protest against the facility with which gentlemen, in the higher ranks of science, are accustomed to give their signatures in commendation of works they have but slightly turned over, or never read at all, and of whose authors they know nothing. Mr. Field's "Analysis" was printed in this country in 1822, and has since been appended to the several American editions of Chitty's Blackstone, now on almost every lawyer's shelves; and yet here is a piratical transcript of that work, rendered of very questionable value by the compiler's additions, ushered forth to the public, like the latest patent medicine, with a string of certificates from some half a dozen eminent judges and lawyers, no one of whom, it is but charity to suppose, ever examined it with any care, yet all of whom commend it as an original work, of great merit, and highly deserving the patronage of the profession. Would

they have given any man a letter of credit to their grocer, upon so little inquiry into his character ?

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5. — *The Tusculan Questions of Marcus Tullius Cicero. In Five Books.* Translated by GEORGE ALEXANDER OTIS, Esq. 12mo. Boston : James B. Dow, Publisher. 1839.

“OPINIONUM enim commenta delet Dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.” These words of Cicero the translator of the *Tusculan Questions* has very properly adopted as a part of the motto to his volume ; as the inroads which time has made on some points of speculative philosophy, and the confirmation it has afforded to others, are nowhere more strikingly visible, than in this work. The great Roman orator, philosopher, and moralist, as is well known, was deeply versed in the writings of the Greeks ; but he brought to the investigation of truth a mind, in a good degree independent of authority ; nor was he afraid to declare openly his own opinions. Moral qualities the most attractive and impressive are exhibited in his philosophical writings ; and his sentiments are clothed in a style so polished and ornamented, and yet so precise and well adapted to the subject in discussion, that a charm is diffused over the whole, which takes an irresistible hold on the reader. To the full understanding, however, of a work so ancient, something more is now wanting than the bare text. This translation, therefore, we think, should have been accompanied with a clear statement of the object of each of the dialogues, and of the nature of the argument. Something likewise is needed, if all the interest is to be given to the work of which it is susceptible, to apprise the reader of what later investigations have shown to be erroneous, or have confirmed, in the reasonings of Cicero. Illustrations of this kind need not have occupied much space, and would have made this translation far more intelligible and attractive ; and the entire want of them is the first objection we have to this performance.

Another objection is, that this translation, considered as an exhibition of the thoughts of Cicero, is not unfrequently erroneous, often obscure, where there is no direct violation of the author's meaning, and sometimes so harshly and even awkwardly expressed, as to form a most striking contrast to the easy, graceful, and harmonious flow of the original. To show very obvious and undeniable mistakes in expressing in English Cicero's meaning, we might turn to almost any page of the